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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/039,055	12/31/2001	Rajendran S. Michael	25143A	9092

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OWENS CORNING
2790 COLUMBUS ROAD
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EXAMINER

CHEVALIER, ALICIA ANN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1772

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2003

5

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/039,055

Applicant(s)

MICHAEL ET AL.

Examiner

Alicia Chevalier

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 9-12 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-8 and 13-21, drawn to an energy-absorbing element, classified in class 428, subclass 174.
 - II. Claims 9-12, drawn to method of manufacturing an energy absorbing sheath, classified in class 264, subclass various.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions II and I are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case the product as claimed can be made by a materially different process such as co-extrusion.
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. During a telephone conversation with Stephen W. Barns on March 10, 2003 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of group I, claims 1-8 and 13-21.

Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims

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9-12 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims 2 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The term "co-fiberized composite material" in claims 2 and 14 is unclear which renders the claims vague and indefinite. The specification on page 7 lines 1-3 seem to define "co-fiberized" as merely having mixed or entangled fibers. It is unclear if this is all the entire term means and how it is different from claim 1 or claim 13.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

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A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

9. Claims 1-8 and 13-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tanaka et al. (5,285,089).

Tanaka discloses an interior-finishing material for use in automobiles comprising a surface material (polymer trim panel) and a sheath formed of a co-fiberized composite material comprising a mixture of glass (mineral) and organic fibers (col. 3, lines 7-13, abstract, and figure 1). The organic fibers can be fibers such as polyethylene or polyester fibers (col. 3, lines 9-13). The surface material comprises polyurethane foam (col. 4, lines 35-42). From figures 5 and 6 it can be seen that the interior-fishing material has U-shape.

Example 1 teaches preparing the composite material with 90 parts by weight of glass fibers and 10 parts by weight polyester fibers to obtain a sheet thickness of 6 mm and a density of 550 g/m².

In regard to the limitations “capable of absorbing a portion of impact energy created during collision” and “adapted to be positioned adjacent to a vehicle pillar,” it has been held that the recitation that an element is “adapted to” or “capable of” perform/performing a function is not a positive limitation but only requires the ability to so perform. *In re Hutchison*, 69 USPQ 138. Since, Tanaka meets all the structural limitations of the claims it is inherent that Tanaka is capable of absorbing a portion of impact energy created during collision and adapted to be positioned adjacent to a vehicle pillar.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al. (5,2858,089).

Tanaka discloses all the limitations of the instant claimed invention except for the trim panel resin has a density from about 0.5 g/cm³ to about 1.5 g/cm³. Since Tanaka also uses a polyurethane resin, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use a polyurethane resin with a density of from about 0.5 g/cm³ to about 1.5 g/cm³, since it have been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Conclusion

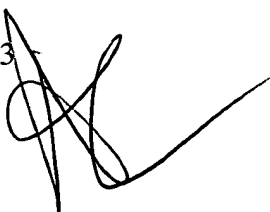
12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alicia Chevalier whose telephone number is (703) 305-1139. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays

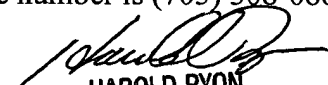
If attempts to reach the Examiner are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Harold Pyon can be reached by dialing (703) 308-4251. The fax phone number for the organization official non-final papers is (703) 872-9310. The fax number for after final papers is (703) 872-9311.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose phone number is (703) 308-0661.

ac

3/24/03




HAROLD PYON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
1772

3/24/03